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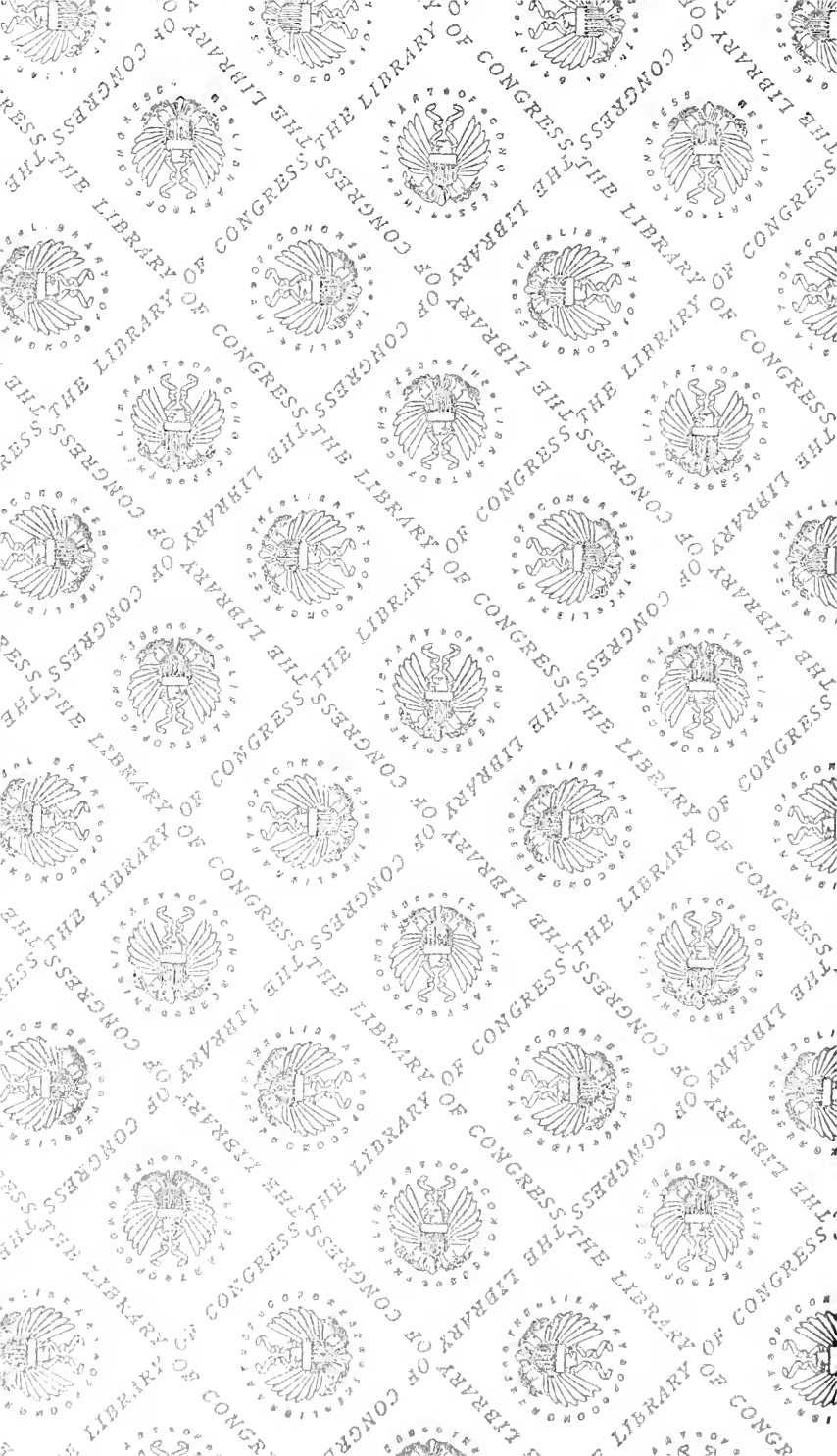
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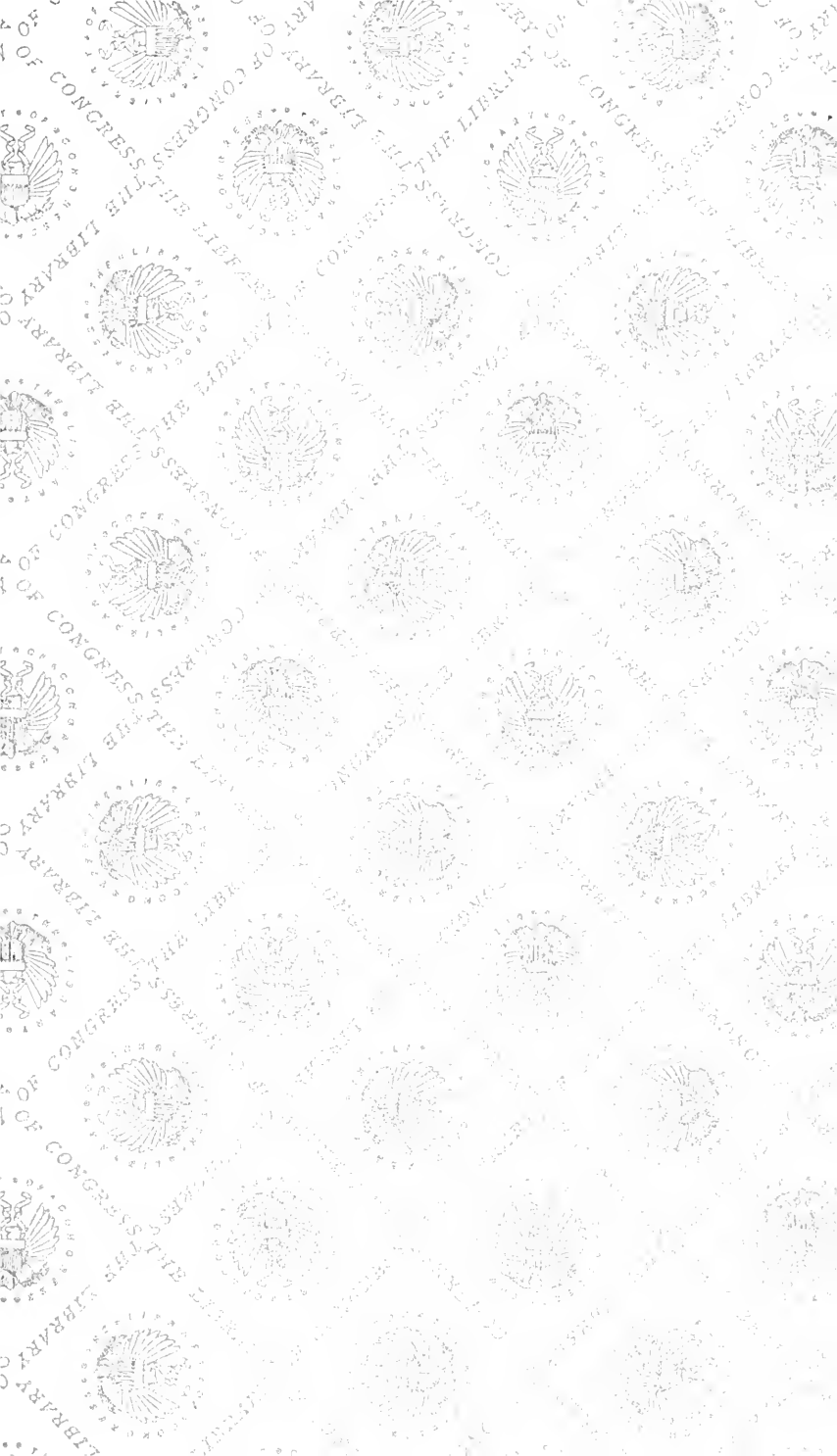
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TWO SERMONS.

I. SIGNS OF OUR NATIONAL ATHEISM.

II. THE WAR BEGUN.

BY

C. D. HELMER,
MILWAUKEE.

Preached in Plymouth Church on the Evenings of April 21st and 28th, 1861.

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SIGNS OF OUR NATIONAL ATHEISM.

These are days when the noise of tumultuous events breaks over into the quietude of the Sabbath. As it sometimes happens with our lake, which lies out here, behind the bluffs: when there is a powerful and persistent sweep of the winds across the water you will hear the roar of the excited billows, reverberating along the shore and breaking, in softened thunder, over into the city, pouring the echoes of the storm down the streets, through the windows and doors of our houses, even into the sacred silence of the inmost chamber—so is it now with the tempestuous roar that comes up from the stormy deep of this turbulent nation. The low thunder and the shrill hiss of this popular whirlwind break in upon every sphere of life, resounding through the shop, the counting-room, the office, the court house, the exchange, the market, the school, penetrating the very vestibule of religion, and invading even its inmost temple. Only one week ago to-day, from morning till evening, and late into the night, groups of men were gathered upon the corners of the streets, waiting for the telegrams from Fort Sumter, and eagerly discussing the latest news, with every demonstration of excitement. Many forgot the house of God altogether; and some of those who visited the sanctuary were thinking more of the telegraphic despatches than of the Word of God.

Now, it is in vain to talk of holding back the popular mind from thinking upon this inflammatory subject. Only dead men, and such as are as good as dead—I mean such as are morally, politically and patriotically fast asleep—only such men will remain

without a touch of excitement amid this national tumult. And it is in vain, moreover, to talk of excluding the theme from the house of God. I should like to see you shut out from this consecrated audience room the atmosphere, and the light, and the echoes of the noisy street. If you did, you would have a vacuum in which no man could live ; a darkness in which no eye could see ; and the empty silence of sepulchres.

And just because this theme of the times thrusts itself into the Church, and upon the tranquility of the Sabbath ; just because it is so all-penetrating, it cannot, rightly nor reasonably, be ignored and declined. I do not propose to do so easy a thing as merely to excite an already excited people. It is not a very difficult, nor a very venturesome, nor a very heroic deed, to throw a few shavings upon a house already covered with flames. Nevertheless, our present affairs have a religious, as well as a political aspect ; and this should not be lost sight of amid the turbulence of the hour. Nay, I think that if, as a people, we do not seize the religious significance of the times, and make that use of events which God intends, we shall be hardened, instead of softened, as we ought to be, by this Divine chastisement. And, so, it is my present purpose to present some thoughts upon the *moral* and *religious* aspect of our national difficulties. Not by any means, my friends, shall I venture to speak to you as a politician or a statesman ; but simply as one appointed to expound the Word of God in public, and apply it to all practical uses.

As the basis of these remarks, I take from the prophecy of Zephaniah, 1:12 : “ *And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men who are settled on their lees ; that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.* ”

There are two classes of listeners to the Gospel, and they stand upon opposite sides. Those of the one class are always ready and pleased to hear discourses about the Jews. They appear to relish God's dealings with that chosen people of antiquity ; and are able to appreciate the righteousness of God in visiting iniquity with just retribution, as well as the Divine mercy and forbearance in attempting to bring the nation up into a true religious culture. But for such hearers you must keep the gospel inside of Palestine,

and outside of the United States. They like the Old Testament, but cannot suffer it to be cumbered with practical observations and modern applications. They will listen attentively to you while commenting on the Jews, so long as you do not intimate, or leave a crack in the discourse large enough to let a little suggestion fall through, that these truths might apply to men and things in our day.

Those of the other class cannot endure any reference to the Jews, unless it be followed up with a rhetorical thunder-clap, right overhead, to electrify the dead allusion, and drop a fiery bolt into some magazine of existing evils. They want an American, not a Hebrew, gospel; and sometimes they carry this modernizing to such an extravagant pitch that they despise and reject whatever is not dug out of the soil right under their feet. Both of these are extremes; and as usual, the right and the true lies somewhere between them.

I believe the history of the Jews was designed—and the record by Divine Inspiration accomplished the design — to be a portraiture of God's method of dealing with chosen nations. There are elected nations and have always been, whom God has taken to be special instruments, for the time, in carrying forward his plans for the race. And of all these the Jews have been made the most conspicuous. In them and through them God restored to the world the lost knowledge of His Unity and Universal Sovereignty. He caused them to triumph marvelously over nations which were given wholly to idolatry; whereby He disclosed to the world that He is Supreme above all gods.

But in accomplishing these purposes, as is evident from their instructive history, the people of Israel were a rude and unpliant material to work with. See how God found it necessary to smite them again and again, scattering the bones of the first generation, after leaving Egypt, in the wilderness, and sending their more tractable children into the Promised Land. Much as God loved the Hebrews; rich and abundant and absolute as were His promises to them, He was forced many times to rain retribution upon their gross, astounding, and abominable iniquities, and at last to scatter them with the whirlwind of His righteous judgment, throughout

the earth, where they remain to this day, dispersed, in their monumental destiny, as a warning to rebellious and sin-loving nations.

This is a historic picture that ought to have made all future nations more wise respecting the will and providential measures of God. It establishes, at any rate, beyond all controversy, that there is a God of Nations; and that there are national rewards and punishments meted out justly by this Omnipotent Sovereign. And the passage which I have quoted from the Prophecy of Zephaniah, made in the days of King Josiah, is an expression of the fact that God will search out iniquities and punish them. He will punish men and nations who are settled on their lees; that is, men and nations who continue in sin in spite of all entreaties and admonitions. Sometimes these men and nations say, "The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil;" and so they encourage and comfort themselves in their wickedness. Men are fond of putting God out of the way both by their wily sophistries and by their processes of self-delusion. Yet, a God that does neither good nor evil is no God—is nothing. Just as a man, of whom it could be said that he does neither good nor evil, is no man—is nobody. But this national atheism will be punished; and will be punished here, seeing there is no throne of judgment set among the stars, in the world hereafter, for the final reckoning of nations.

The American people—I regret to say it—are chargeable with the immense and heinous sin of *National Atheism*. They do not profess to be a people without a God; they have never voted in their popular assemblies that "there is no God." Nay, rather, we stand forth among the nations a so-called Christian people, and if the question were to-day put to the world, "What are the Americans?" it would be responded from every land under the sun—"They are a Christian nation." I wish this response had no need of a qualification.

But so much the worse, if we are nominally Christian, and yet may be justly accused of atheism. And we should hardly have expected this so *soon* after the era—eventful, immortal, and glorious—that we love to call "the Revolution." We should not have looked for such a defection from the reputation of our ancestors at so early a period. They believed in a God of nations and a God of battles. They recognized His sovereignty and His con-

trol in human affairs. They were eminently religious. And yet before a century has marched its hundred years, under the blazing banner of revolving suns, into the eternal world, we have forgotten it.

But was it not precisely so with the Children of Israel? God opened a dry road for their escape through the Red Sea, granting them a miraculous deliverance from their enemies; and yet how soon were they bowing before the golden calf! The likeness is striking—yea, more than that—positively startling. The Jews forgot the God who brought them out of the bondage of the Pharaohs; and we have forgotten the God who delivered us from a foreign dominion and granted us a separate and free nationality. God sent a just punishment upon the apostate and ungrateful Hebrews; and what ought we to expect under like circumstances?

But let me speak more particularly of some national traits wherein this atheism discloses itself.

And, first, I arraign the *godless spirit of gain* in the commercial world. You know very well that we have been charged with being worshippers of the “almighty dollar.” Whether this ought to be considered an unjust or an extravagant accusation, you are as competent to decide as anybody. Certain it is, that this nation has grown rich in an incredibly short period of time. We began like an apprentice or clerk in the vast establishment of nations; and to-day—almost before we are twenty-one—we are not only a respectable firm, but stand alongside of the oldest and largest houses of the world. We are able to enlarge our business on every hand, and have money to loan besides.

Now it cannot but be with a nation as with individuals: those who become rich with such swift accumulations are exposed to mighty temptations. The inspired author of Proverbs says, “He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.” And our Lord said, “How hardly shall they which have riches enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.” In which is involved the truth, that in the acquisition of wealth lie immense hazards to the moral character. And one of the Apostles said, “The love of money is the root of all evil.”

Now the possession of property is a good thing as a means—a help—in this earthly life. It is not to be despised nor underesti-

mated as such. But money *as an end*—the acquiring of gain merely to hold and possess it—the pursuit of riches simply to be rich, is degrading and ruinous to the higher nature of man. And just here, as a people, we have been exposed to the strongest and most perilous temptations. We have made haste to be rich. There has arisen a fungus aristocracy of wealth. It has seemed so necessary a thing to be rich, that there has been a general rush for gold, with an immense disregard of the methods by which it was to be gotten.

As a consequence, the conscience has grown torpid. A thousand expedients have been tolerated in the transactions of business for money-making, that would have been hissed and hooted at elsewhere. Multitudes have become financial Jesuits—acting on the base assumption that “the end justifies the means.” The end being money—get it, honestly if you can, with no more sacrifice of moral principle perhaps than is necessary, but be sure to get it.

In this mad haste and hot pursuit men have not paused even to consider the law of equivalents in the acquiring of wealth. Hence, they have gambled in stocks, laid wagers on scrip, frightened and intoxicated the markets, running into the wildest speculations, with the hope of realizing a fortune by the sudden change of prices or by some propitious turn of luck.

And as a necessary result we have had bankruptcies as abundant as autumn leaves. Why, it has come to be quite an entertaining trick of financial jugglery to break down—to “*suspend*,” this very charitable age denominates it—settle with creditors for so many cents on the dollar—take the balance and start again.

Then, too, the financial world seems to be visited by a periodical plague. We call these visitations “*panics*.” They are becoming alarmingly frequent. This is an age of panics. And no wonder, when we come to observe how money matters are managed. Suppose you should go down to the harbor and take the hull of a fishing-smack, rigging it with three masts, tall enough for a man-of-war. Then, spreading your immense sails over the contracted keel, you undertake to navigate the stormy lakes, with every inch of canvas given to the winds. Why, the very first squall would capsize your top-heavy craft. Fishing smacks were

not meant to carry the sails of men-of-war. And yet this has been the attempted navigation in finance. The immensely expanded sails of speculation have been lifted up on the narrow hull of legitimate business, and almost every squall has filled the waves with floundering passengers screaming above the tumult of the catastrophe—"panics ! panics !"

It has resulted from this greediness for gain that many men have become unscrupulous in respect to means and methods ; oblivious of honesty, integrity and justice, and oftentimes falling into grievous sins and heinous crimes by reason of it. What a gloomy history of robberies, forgeries, and defalcations might be gathered into a book out of the last ten years.

Well, what have we to say concerning all this ? I have this to say—that no people having such a career can believe in a God of honesty, truth and justice. They may nominally recognize him, but they say in their hearts, "The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil." But we have the word of Inspiration, and I think, something more—even the current events of Divine Providence to prove that God will punish the men who utter such atheistic sentiments.

2. As a second feature, I mention the godless *worship of Party*. It has been altogether too much the popular sentiment—"Our Party, right or wrong." Why, such a vile sentiment as that is enough to rot down the tree of Liberty, planted by our fathers. And if this magnificent tree, that waves its enormous boughs over this vast continent, and which we proudly looked to see bearing fruit for the healing of oppressed nations, and casting a refreshing shadow far and wide for our weary Humanity—if this tree, I say, shall ever fall, it will be because of decay within—rather than by traitorous strokes upon the bark.

To be willing, under any circumstances, to do wrong is utterly unsafe. But when a people are so corrupt as to elevate the motto, that right must be subordinate to party, they cannot be many leagues off from political shipwreck. The country is of immeasurably greater value than any party ; patriotism is a far higher, nobler and better sentiment than partizanship ; but to assert even the motto—"Our Country, right or wrong"—as many are forward to do—is taking a false and dangerous posi-

tion. We are not to side with or uphold the wrong under any circumstances. That we are committed against, not only by a higher, but the highest law. Our party—if it is right, and our country, when right, with all that we have and are ; but neither of them—so sure as there is a just God presiding over the destiny of nations—when we conscientiously believe them wrong. But party before principles, party before right and justice and truth, is a doctrine for devils and pirates—not for honest, christian citizens.

There is also another sentiment, false and foul, and certainly in its tendencies disastrous to our institutions. I mean that which is expressed by the phrase, “To the victors belong the spoils.” Why, this sounds as though we were in the midst of a campaign, and our governmental offices were lawful objects of party plunder. What wonder that we sometimes have piratical officers in command of the Ship of State, when our modes of election are not much elevated above the manoeuvres of professed buchaneers. Spoils ! The positions of the rulers of a great and respectable people—sacred and honorable offices—degraded systematically to the level of booty—the prizes of a meaner than guerrilla warfare ! If we are not beyond shame, it ought to make the country blush. Any people guilty of such things deserves to become as smoke, not only in the nostrils of a just and holy God, but also of all the nations round the globe.

Connected with this very motto, and partly growing out of this sentiment, and subject to the same condemnation, stands the custom of *employing money in carrying elections*. This is one of the more recent developments in our national drift toward, or I should say, *into* political corruption. Whatever other things parties of a former generation may have been guilty of, they did not devise nor practice such iniquity as this. What is this but wholesale bribery ? Voters sell their ballots to the highest bidder ; the offices of our Commonwealth are purchased shamelessly by gold—these buyers and sellers in the Temple of Liberty not seeming to be aware that there is an Omniscient God, whose burning eye of detection is looking down out of Heaven upon such wicked and abominable venality. *The government at auction !* is this it ? or dare you call it something else ? The government

of these United States put up for the highest bidder—the Stars and Stripes, our country's banner, becoming the auctioneer's flag of this mercenary and ruinous political sale! God forgive us this enormous crime! And if it is necessary that He should send us bitter chastisement for this treacherous wickedness, may it lead the people to profound repentance and an utter breaking off from this guilty policy. Herein, and herein only, shall we find deliverance and safety.

Strange, men are sometimes appointed prophets. But let me remind you of a political prediction made some twelve years ago by the man who has just retired from the Presidency of these United States. He said at that time, speaking of the employment of money to carry elections—"Should this practice increase until the voters and their representatives in the state and national legislatures shall become corrupted, the fountain of free government will then be poisoned at its source, and *we must end*, as history proves, *in military despotism.*" I ask you now whether this prediction does not seem to be hastening toward its partial fulfilment. Does it not look as though history was reasserting its eternal principles now; when in this peaceful nation our sickles are bent back into swords, our pruning hooks into bayonets, our plough-shares converted into battle-axes, and this broad continent of farms has become the bannered and resounding camp of marshaled armies? Believe me, this result is not without its sufficient cause. And the betrayal of Liberty, divinely bestowed, by this sale and purchase—a shameless and godless traffic—of the sacred privileges of free citizenship, is part of the seed sown within the past quarter century, which, now upsprung, and ripening into a whirlwind of disaster, we may be forced to reap in a bloody harvest of battles.

3 It becomes necessary also to mention, in the revolting list of things that disclose our forgetfulness of God, *Official Corruption*, as a responsible and guilty element. Rulers ought to be a terror to evil doers. The government of any people is a sacred institution, and the men who are chosen to fill its offices ought to be men conscious of moral obligation and the responsibilities of official position. But how has it been with us? Do we not all know, alas, too well, that upright, high-minded, honorable men have

for years shrunk from entering into our political contests, many times, because they must be defeated, unless they could descend to the base intrigues and unscrupulous measures of mere demagogues? Offices have thus been sought for their emoluments. The office itself has been valued and estimated in dollars and cents, and so low has it sunk, that no one is any longer surprised by even the most astounding developments of official corruption. The people have almost come to take such things as a matter of course. They scarcely look for anything else. I sometimes think the only way to create astonishment now is by means of official honesty and integrity, and that seems to awaken the people and cause them to open their eyes sooner than almost anything else. But can any people—I care not how well planted in origin, how religiously, patriotically and wisely founded upon constitution and law—can any people long endure, when their officers are men oblivious of religion, of patriotism and a just wisdom? No! they cannot: as sure as there is a God of nations; a God of justice, righteousness and truth.

Why, in this devastating sweep of official corruption even the *sacred oaths* of office become the profanest trifles. Men in the highest places of public confidence, with the solemn oath to support the Constitution and the Laws lying upon their souls and registered before Almighty God, have most recklessly violated their official vows and trampled on the very laws they had sworn, before Heaven and earth, to defend and obey. When the rulers of a people are found guilty of such horrible sacrilege and crime as this, what ought we to expect but dissolution and overthrow—if there is a Divine President over human affairs—as we believe there is? If men in private life were so regardless of their oaths and vows we should be a nation of robbers, among whom it would be utterly unsafe to dwell. Can you conceive of a lower deep of corruption into which men can fall than the unscrupulous disregard of oaths, taken before God, calling Him to witness; and invoking His retribution upon the violation of them? A man who can do that can do anything else imaginable.

4. Furthermore, there has grown up with our free institutions a laxity, in thinking and acting, toward *law and order*. We have developed amazingly in individuality; so much so that we have

probably overgrown somewhat in that direction. This is not unnatural. The pendulum of social and political development is appointed of God to swing beyond the perpendicular. But it must return and will return. We have been like children just dismissed from the school-room, romping and racing with all our might in the exuberance of an enthusiastic spirit, called into being by unwonted liberties. We have acted sometimes as though we hardly knew what to do with ourselves. We were so young, so vigorous, so untrammelled, so madly joyous. The sedate old nations, with hoary locks and wrinkled brows and sturdy frames, have stood with folded arms gazing at us, sometimes amused and sometimes amazed, sometimes shaking the head and sometimes nodding smiling assent, and sometimes utterly nonplused. But it will hardly do for nations to be boys very long, unless they are unusually good boys. In this ungirding, unbuckling and national loosening we have perhaps let out our girdles and straps too many holes. Not so much a wonder is it, however, for the Kings and Emperors had kept man laced and girded up so tightly that it was almost impossible to breathe, much less to grow and be vigorous and healthy. It was a bad fashion—that political and civil tight-lacing; but this is no reason why we should break our ribs in a too sudden and unlimited expansion, and I think we will not; but we need caution.

We have forgotten too much the sanctity of Law, and have failed to remember that Order is of celestial birth. We have stood upon our continent, shaking our fist in the face of the world, vociferously announcing the dogma that we had the right “to do as we please,” and moreover, distinctly intended to exercise that right. Consequently, there has been a reflex influence. The seed that we, as the husbandmen of humanity, threw into the air to be scattered upon the old continent, was partly blown back by the wind; and, having sprung up around our own feet, the harvest is now on our hands. We must reap it and be more careful next time.

But there has been something very serious in this excessive liberty. We have claimed the right to think and speak and act freely, and I hope we never shall be deprived of it; but, in exercising this right we have not always regarded truth and justice and charity. We have too many times placed a higher estimation up-

on our freedom from restraint than upon law and rectitude. And, in this letting down, crime has gone unpunished; the penalties of law have often been degraded into mere farces; we have too many times thrown turf at the offenders, instead of effective fragments of judicial granite; and criminals have in multitudes escaped justice, especially when shielded and aided by money in their flight and evasion.

We have been given also to the utmost license of criticism upon our government in all its departments: and we have a right to arraign and try the officials, for they are our servants. But especially in our political campaigns there has been a reckless and unrighteous custom of disparaging and villifying rival candidates; the truth in multitudes of cases being perverted or quite suppressed, and unmitigated lies shamelessly and with unblushing persistence held forward to the public gaze, for the mere purpose of purloining votes. And the demagogue presses of the country have, to-day, this greivous sin upon their consciences—if they have any left; and now, when the nation is imperiled from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the great Lakes to the Gulf, it ought to sit heavy upon their souls as the ghost of a murdered victim upon the breast of conscious guilt.

Such has been the license with which rulers of the government have been discussed that almost all respect and veneration have been destroyed; and you behold now a measurable reaction, when, on both sides of our famous division Line, excited mobs compel, by threats and violence, a cautious and respectful utterance. We have too many times failed to distinguish between the office, which is sacred, and the man who may happen to fill it worthily or unworthily. And to such a pitch has this come, that we have, to-day, the spectacle of a formidable rebellion, baptized with the name of a government based upon the Providence of God. It is boldly stated—and I greatly admire the boldness and plainness of the declaration, while I utterly discard the idea—that this recent organization of rebels—* “is the first government ever instituted upon principles in strict conformity to nature and the ordination of Providence, in furnishing the materials of human society.” When it is thus clearly and unmistakably declared by a leader,

* Speech of A. H. Stephens, Savannah, March 22, 1861.

that the abominable system of African slavery is God's best and only basis for a human civil government, it becomes us to pause and consider whither we are drifting, and whether we are not within sound of the breakers. In this marvellous looseness of speech the Fathers of American Liberty are flung overboard by the toss of a few sentences of easy rhetoric.

5. Besides these things I must mention, also, an *enormous confidence in the omnipotence of the United States*. We have spoken great swelling words in our own praise. We have tolerated and even fostered a stilted and inflated language of self-laudation. We have quite deified America, and cast down our offerings at the feet of this national goddess. We have worshiped the almighty America. I said a little while ago that we were accused of worshiping the "almighty dollar;" but we are chargeable with devotion to another idol; there is a twin branch to our idolatry; for we have worshiped also the almighty United States.

It has seemed to us in our sheltered continental dwelling place, with the sleepless billows of guardian oceans upon either hand, and our remoteness from the arenas of the old national struggles, that we were safe and invincible. We have congratulated ourselves upon our unanimity, our patriotism, our numbers, our sagacity, our peaceable dispositions; and have said, or seemed to say: "who is able to subdue us? Let the old world combined send forth her swarming armaments, we are sufficient to meet the invading hosts of the world." And so we have become self-reliant, proud, boastful, arrogant, and self-willed. Our enormous confidence in ourselves has undermined and destroyed our confidence in Jehovah. We have felt so nearly, if not quite, omnipotent ourselves, that we have not perceived the need of assistance even from a Divine Helper. And we ought not to be surprised, therefore, if we are jarred and shaken out of this soporific self-confidence by the vigorous chastisements of a jealous God, who claims, and will never surrender, the allegiance of all the nations upon the face of the earth.

6. As last in the list of these atheistical developments I bring forward the results of an *unparalleled prosperity*. We have not, like most other nations, grown up by the natural increase of successive generations; but we have occupied an open region

into which the entire Old World has emptied her crowded populations. We have said—"let them come—there is room enough and to spare." And while the increase of our census reports has amazed the world, the augmentation of our wealth and power has confounded all ordinary means and methods of measurement.

And thus, busy everywhere with our peaceful pursuits, we have settled on our lees and have come to think nothing could greatly disturb us. We have from time to time lifted up our eyes and looked across the oceans to see other nations convulsed with revolutions, tossed and shaken by the earthquakes of war, or rolling confounded upon the fiery billows of political anarchy; and have never dreamed that by and by our turn would come. We have gazed upon those trans-Atlantic wonders, as if they were the scenes of a panorama unrolling before our vision leisurely for our entertainment. Meantime God was calling to us by the voice of battles, and revolts, and anarchic tumults—"Watch and Pray—lest ye enter into temptation. Watch! lest in such an hour as ye think not—the Son of Man shall come." But we would not hear; we would not watch; we did not pray: and now he is at the door.

A halcyon period of almost unexampled peace has been granted us in our national growth. The art of war has well nigh become obsolete, our military system degenerating through an ever-dwindling and sinking militia discipline down to the farce of a holiday parade; till now, when, roused by the dreadful emergency of the times, we begin to clutch for the weapons of warfare, like soldiers who have been awakened from slumbers by an unexpected call to arms. We have proudly boasted that we needed no standing army. While Italy, and Russia, and the Germanic States, and France, and Spain, and England have been marching and countermarching, arming and disciplining, expending immense sums upon their armies, we have thanked our stars, instead of God, that we were burdened with no such oppressive tax of war. But that pleasant dream is over for the present. That lethargy into which we were deeply settling and which undoubtedly was ruinous in its results, has been broken in upon by the terrific thunder-peals of an opening war—and the most dreadful of all—a civil war. Our turn has come. The God of nations and of battles--whom we have so guiltily forsaken, have mercy upon us!

Throughout this brief review, my friends, we discover that we are chargeable with being atheistic upon the one side and morally corrupt upon the other. We have settled upon our lees. We have said in our hearts—"The Lord will not do good neither will he do evil." And I believe He has now come to search us, as with candles, and to bring merited punishment upon us for our great iniquities.

I do not forget that the institution of African slavery, as it exists in our country, is to be regarded as the more immediate occasion of the present outbreak and trouble by which we are to-day shaken from centre to circumference. But wicked and offensive in the sight of God and the majority of mankind as I believe that institution to be, we might have perhaps been enabled to carry it forward until God by some peaceful means should have removed the burden from us, had we not become so enfeebled in our body politic by reason of our godlessness and moral corruptions. And now, when in our moral impotence it seems to be breaking us down, God is coming in the whirlwind to take the matter in His own hand and accomplish the work himself.

We had almost forgotten, as a nation, that there is a God. It is still fresh in our memory how a distinguished Senator presented a resolution so to amend the Constitution as to cause it to recognize the existence of God. And this in America! the land of the Puritans; the land upon whose savage shores the Christian discoverer Columbus planted the Cross in token of its submission to the sway of Jesus Christ; the land of Bibles and Churches and religious institutions unsurpassed!

And now, in view of these things, what have we to do? Repent of our sins and seek the God whom we have forsaken. If our principles have become corrupt, let us renew our allegiance to Truth, Justice and Liberty. This is the religious aspect of the case: and these are the duties which God imposes upon us as a people. And such, I believe, will be, to a greater or less extent, the result of our present fearful trials. Already you hear men, addressing our excited popular assemblies, appeal to the God of our Fathers and recognize the debauchery of the national conscience. The omen is favorable: let us take courage.

We are in the midst of the horrors of a civil war. Fraternal

blood has already crimsoned American soil. The drum-beat of mustering armies rolls across the broad continent with the revolving sun; hurrying squadrons are arming and crowding toward the focal points of conflict; more than thirty millions of people are seething and surging with terrific excitements, while the whole land is filled with the roar of a whirlwind of popular tumult.

We ought to be deeply aroused by the grandeur of the occasion. It ought to make men even of cravens and native sneaks. This is not the hour for fear and cowardice. But in our excitement let us never lose our patience and justice and fervent charity. These will unfit us for no duties.

But above all, let us not lose our faith in Almighty God—the God of our fathers. Let us look beyond the darkness of the storm and behold, by faith, the rainbow, mounted upon its cloudy chariot, driving the storm swiftly toward the distant horizon, while, all beneath, the green fields and shining hills and glittering forests open into the pleasant light of the returning sun of Peace. God is searching us; but, as I believe, to correct our sins and not to destroy this generation and bury it beneath the ruins of our noble institutions.

None of us ever saw a day like this. We are fallen upon wondrous times. We have thought God was stirring up the Old nations; but behold! he is stirring up the New also. If we are Christians, there never was a time when we needed such a humble, fervent, importunate, spirit of prayer as now; when we needed so much courage, hope, faith and love. If we are Patriots, there never was a time when we so needed a new baptism of love for our country and our whole country, as now. The Constitution and the Union are imperiled; and this great fact, swallowing up all minor difficulties, should unite all patriotic hearts in a noble emulation in self-sacrifice and heroism.

In our patriotism, let us retain the love of God; in serving our country, let us serve our country's God; and in standing by the Constitution and the Union, let us stand close by the side of Jesus Christ, our Divine Leader and Master, with this sublime prayer ever upon our willing lips—*Thy Kingdom Come.*

THE WAR BEGUN.

Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain ; exalt the voice unto them ; shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I have commanded my sanctified ones ; I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people : a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together ; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. *Isa.* 13 : 2, 3, 4.

This is a vivid description of a nation recruiting and mustering for war. The national Banner is unfurled and lifted up as a rallying centre ; proclamations are issued, calling upon the people to arm themselves for the battle ; God is represented as declaring that He had commanded and called His chosen regiments ; then there is the sound of mustering squadrons wheeling into line and marching to the rendezvous, like the tumultuous roar of whirlwinds among the mountains.

The Prophet could hardly have hit our country and our times better, if he had aimed directly at them, by this sublime description. So exactly are the experiences of nations repeated in the course of ages. This mustering of forces was for the invasion and destruction of Babylon, and was called for prophetically some twenty-five hundred years ago. It was God's grand mustering-call to vindicate righteousness and justice in the world, and show to the nations that their sins are observed of Heaven, and will not go forever unpunished. And when God summons an army into the field, placing Himself at the head of it, you need not be told that victory is sure.

Last Sabbath evening I ventured in this place to speak to you concerning evils which belong to the entire nation, and which

have been more or less instrumental in bringing us to the present crisis, and which we need to repent of, that God may vindicate our cause. And I feel convinced that no one will be able to charge us with a want of generosity or magnanimity in thus, first of all, frankly acknowledging any blame that may justly attach to ourselves, as well as others, before pointing our guns directly and unswervingly at the sins of our neighbors.

I undertake then to-night to speak to you upon these two questions chiefly—"What are we fighting for?" and "What are the duties of Patriots in the present emergency?"

The country is in arms. The peace of the United States is broken. The ominous thunder of approaching battle rolls its dreadful mutterings along the dark cloud of gathering storms. The descending shower will be red. It is to rain blood. There seems to be no shelter for our heads; and patriots need none when they are fighting for God and their Country. And I believe we are on the side of right, of justice, humanity and of God. Let us see.

1. We are called upon to defend the *existing Constitutional Government of the United States*. There is, of course, presumption in favor of the government as it exists at present. It has been the protection of our lives, our property, our homes, our civil, social, and religious institutions, for more than three score years and ten. We do not claim that it is a perfect government; but we have regarded it as an advance upon all those which existed before it. It has been our satisfaction at home, and the boast of our pride when abroad. We have been forward to proclaim ourselves, even among the Kingdoms and Empires of the Old World, as citizens of the Republic of the United States of America—a free government—yea, the freest and best under the sun. We have gloried in our Constitution—as we had excellent occasion to do. I know there have been those who have execrated it and spit upon it as an instrument framed against the rights of humanity; but they have probably misconceived its spirit and intention. And we have the instructive spectacle to-day of an eminent statesman upon the Southern side—called now the Vice-President of a new Confederacy—declaring that the Constitution is for freedom and against slavery—but a document

freighted with a fatal mistake through the ignorance of its framers. The Constitution stands for Liberty and Equality, but it is *wrong*. Such is the orthodoxy of the newest political school.

And this is the Constitution, fellow citizens, which we are now called to take up arms to defend. The Right of Revolution exists, beyond all controversy. When a people are oppressed by the government ; when their rights are disregarded and trampled down ; when remonstrance is altogether in vain ; when earnest entreaty is dismissed with contempt ; when respectful protest is like lifting up the hand against a tempest ; when all such legitimate and commendable methods of seeking redress have been tried and end only in failure—then the right of revolution remains. But such are not the facts in the case of those who are now treacherously seeking to overthrow the government and destroy the Constitution. Their cause deserves no higher title than Rebellion. Those who are leagued together in it are simply rebels. We call them *traitors*—as they are ; and all the blackness of ignominy that settles in Cimmerian gloom upon the name of traitor, will be found upon them ; and not only that, but the cloud of Divine and Patriotic retribution will burst in tremendous ruin upon their heads. Let us, therefore, stand by the Constitution and the existing government against this miserable rebellion.

2. We are called also to defend our *Federal Union*. This family of States, confederated and cemented in their union by the love of Freedom, is now suffering from the violent attempts of a few of its members to sunder the sacred ties and demolish the magnificent fabric, of which we love to think God himself was the Divine Architect and Builder. This Union of States, which was transmitted to this generation by a wise and patriotic ancestry, is threatened by a fearful disintegration. There is a new right claimed ; the right of the individual State to secede from the compact at pleasure. If granted, it becomes a self-destructive right. It is destroying the attraction of cohesion, thus permitting every particle of the aggregate to slide out of its place, however much may depend upon it, even if the entire mass is thereby reduced to a sand heap. This principle of Secession is the principle of dissolution, and cannot but prove fatal to

the entire governmental structure. It is Young America on a national scale ; refusing allegiance to parental government ; turning the house upside down ; insisting on setting up for himself, after breaking the furniture and carrying off the silver and the parlor ornaments ; and, what is the very crown of this sublime impudence, patronizingly inviting the Old Folks, and some of the other children to come and make it their home with him—provided they will sneak over the threshold and behave themselves humbly afterward.

This is the spirit of that Secession which has laid its sacrilegious hand upon our Federal Union. Will you defend it? Shall this glorious inheritance from our Revolutionary Sires be snatched away from their posterity, without a struggle? Shall this Union of States which has commanded the admiration of the world ; which is represented on our national banner by clustering Stars, known and honored everywhere among the nations of the earth ; shall this Union be torn asunder by the desperate wrench of Secession? Shall those dim and rainy seven stars of Rebellion be suffered to gather upon the ignominious folds of the Banner of Treason, and thus break up and scatter, beyond all recombination, upon the sky of nations, this radiant Constellation of United States? Never! And the uplifted voices of twenty millions of patriotic freemen are heard, to-day, from granite hill and alluvial valley, from sea-side and river-side and lake-side, from mountain and prairie, in one tremendous shout and appeal for the Union and Freedom—never! never!

3. But we are called upon, thirdly, to battle for *Freedom* and against *Slavery*. The issue is at last clearly stated ; the lines of combat are distinctly drawn ; and it is well. That fraction of the American people who are to-day enrolled under the flag of Rebellion, with the avowed purpose of establishing a government separate and independent of the United States, claim, as the fundamental principle of their new Constitution, the Divine right and ordinance of African Slavery. The purpose of the Secessionists, therefore, stands before us at last naked and undisguised. It is to establish a government that shall sanction, legalize, enshrine, perpetuate, and defend, this stupendous system of oppression. We of the North who love Liberty and abhor

bondage, must consent to this strengthening of the chains of oppression and lengthening out of the period of inhuman servitude, or suffer the consequences. We are generously permitted to take our choice ; either to surrender our property ; break up the existing federal Union ; bid the seceders, with their hands full of stolen treasures, an affectionate farewell ; or submit ourselves soul and body to their arbitrary dictation, consenting thus that Slavery shall become national and perpetual in the United States. Consider, I pray you, the pleasant alternative thus presented us. But how shall we do either ? Can we—dare we !—as patriots, as Americans, sons of freemen and guardians of the highest civil liberty ever granted to a nation, as lovers of Humanity—dare we accept either servile proposition ?

And this is the political issue which we have been for years approaching. At length it has arrived. Who does not know that this question of African Slavery is the one that has been the prolific source of our national agitations for now a quarter of a century and more ? This iniquitous Institution, thrust upon America by a most wicked love of gain, has thus far been continued for commercial advantages, finding advocates and supporters everywhere. The Christian conscience has lifted up its denouncing and warning voice against it, until the almost entire Northern portion of the Confederation has banished this system of oppression from its soil. But it makes a desperate stand in the South. God says to the Pharaohs of oppression—“Let my people go !” but they cannot let loose from their hands \$600,000,000 of property—even if it is held in human flesh and blood and souls. And the more they feel the pressure of the demands of freedom the more tightly they draw the chains. They ignore compromises, disregard solemn agreements, undertake a system of arrogance and assumption, parade and bullying threats. They buy up mercenary politicians, make cowards of dough-face statesmen ; enter the Senate with revolver and bludgeon, striking down, under the very eyes of the government, the advocate of free speech, free press, and free men. They endeavor to seize forbidden territory to convert it into fields to be covered and ruined by slave labor. They push their traitors into Congress and the Cabinet of the administration, there to carry out a plan

of plunder and despoiling that shall weaken the government and prepare it for an easy subversion. And if, forsooth, Northern men protest against such wrong ; if they begin to speak of their own rights, and to rally for the support of the Constitution and the Union ; if they undertake to defend the very institutions and principles which the fathers of American Independence nobly gave their strength, their property and their lives to secure, why, they are mobbed, murdered, banished, and at length confronted by an armed rebellion, seizing government property and threatening the very Capital of the nation.

This is the enemy that stands armed in our midst to-day. This is the institution and these the principles which they have now taken the sword to defend and perpetuate. And the practical question now is—shall this system of oppression succeed and triumph over justice and liberty ? Shall the great mass of the American people, eighteen millions to three millions, as Secession now stands, yield up all their political rights, their moral convictions, their freedom of speech and action, their patriotism and their very manliness, to these traitors to their country and enemies of human liberty and equality ? How is such a course possible ? We should become a hissing and a by-word among the nations. Our greatness would be at an end. Our glory would be departed. Instead of a republic we should be an oligarchy.

It is no longer the abstract question whether Abraham was a slaveholder, and the dismal conclusion, on the other side of a logical chasm which they all have to leap in their arguments, that, therefore, African slavery, as it exists in the United States, is a Divine Institution ; I say it is no longer this abstract question, but whether the United States shall still exist, a free and liberty-defending Union ; or whether these clustering Stars shall go down forever in the gloom of anarchy and despotism. This is the momentous question which, as a people, we are called this day to answer—and answer finally.

You who are Commercial men, and are painfully aware of the ruinous times that have come upon us ; you who are tossed upon this sea of agitation like fair-weather barges in a tempest, not knowing what shall become of your business schemes ; you know very well that the source of this convulsion and imminent danger

is the unsettled question of Slavery. What then will you do with it? Shall it remain for another quarter century a perpetual fountain of commercial disaster? Or will you say—"Let us dispose of this difficulty now and for all time to come? Let us put at rest forever this sea of turmoil and financial ship-wreck?" Do you want another series of commercial earthquakes? Have you fallen in love with Panics, so that you cannot live happily out of their presence?

No! I feel confident of your sentiments. You demand peace and security. You are heartily sick and tired of these recurring disasters. You say "let us have no more of these financial shocks." And I believe you are ready now to settle the matter—even with pecuniary loss—so that the ghost of it shall never rise again and return to trouble your warehouses, banks and investments.

It has been proposed, in Italy I think, to extinguish a volcano by turning the sea into it. These volcanoes, you know, are often troublesome and devastating creatures in the lands infested by them. They will have their earthquake revels and their eruption jubilees though at the expense of cities, green fields, luxuriant vineyards and multitudes of human lives. So it has been proposed to quench one of these fiery and obnoxious spirits of the Subterranean by opening the gates and letting in the sea upon his fires. I know not whether this will be found practicable or not. But I think the American people now have the opportunity to extinguish the ever-restless volcano of Slavery. I do not mean by this immediate and unqualified abolition. But that as a Servile Institution, opposed in nature and vital spirit to our national liberties and our highest prosperity, it shall lose its aggressive and dictatorial temper, and, restrained within its present limits, live upon itself, if it can—or die, if it cannot. To this end let the gates be opened and the sea of Freedom begin to flow, with extinguishing streams, into the crater of Oppression.

Capital is timid: and it has been crying out these many years amid the anti-slavery agitations—"peace! peace! only give us peace." But the inevitable issue could not be evaded. The conflict between freedom and slavery in America has been, is, and

must be, irresistible. And business men for the most part I think have reached this final and inevitable conclusion.

See how prompt and generous has been the response, all through the North, to the President's call for money to defend the Union. Millions have come forth like magic at the touch of patriotism. We hardly knew how rich we were until now. We were like a Firm that had been doing such an immense business and so pressed by a crowd of customers, that no time had been found to look over the books and see how matters stood. We reckoned we had made a handsome thing of it: but exactly how much it was impossible to tell. Now we begin to ascertain. And amid the multitude of generous offers we read with admiring delight of one solid New Yorker* who quietly and cheerfully offers fourteen millions to his country. Yes! Commerce has lifted up its hand and sworn that oppression shall be no more. It has solemnly vowed in its banks, and exchanges, and Chambers of Commerce, that this Federal Union must and shall be sustained; that the government of these United States shall not be pushed from its throne by the traitorous and bloody hand of a Pro-slavery rebellion. And this sublime and solemn vow of American Commerce shall be fulfilled—God being our helper.

We know not the particulars of the future course and issue of the war begun between Freedom and Slavery, and by the aggression of the latter, upon American soil. God seems to need no prophets in these days: for He sends us none. But I think it is evident that the people are settling down into the conviction that the time has come for the final overthrow and destruction of the Institution of Slavery. This is not the ready sentiment of hot and fiery men who long ago were impatient to see it destroyed root and branch. But now men of all temperaments, of all moral theories, of all political creeds and associations, have run together with unprecedented fluency into the common and universal opinion and feeling that it is high time to obliterate from our national escutcheon this disgraceful blot, and eradicate from our free institutions this uncongenial, disquieting and evermore dangerous element. The sovereign people of the Free States appear to me to have fully and firmly made up their minds to

* The newspapers say this of Mr. Astor.

this conclusion. Nothing perhaps but such an unprovoked and piratical attack upon the government could have so revolutionized the discordant sentiments of a free-thinking people. But manifestly it has been done. We are one : one for the Constitution ; one for the Union ; and one for Freedom.

And let us bear in mind, fellow freemen, that being thus ordained and commissioned in the Providence of God to fight the battles of Freedom on this Western Continent, we are lifted up to the gaze of the world. Nations are watching us. Millions of hearts, over whom royal and imperial scepters wave all round the globe, but in whom are pent up the fires of human freedom and natural rights, waiting only the occasion to burst forth and flame abroad in the conflagrations of revolutions that shall inaugurate new and better eras in despotic governments, are looking to-day with unutterable anxiety to see how this contest between Liberty and Oppression—on this fairest and most propitious field—shall finally terminate. We could not be more conspicuous if our armies were marshalled in the sky and marched along the clouds before the vision of the assembled world.

The poor, the weak and the oppressed of the human race—the millions in Europe and Asia and Africa who are crushed under the thrones of Despotism—are more than spectators in this mighty conflict. They share in our victory and participate in the glorious benefits of the triumph of civil Liberty. We are fighting for those who are not able to defend themselves : and this ought to clothe us with thunder and arm us with lightning. The Tree of Liberty, planted by our venerable fathers upon these hospitable shores, far from the sharp winds and untimely frosts of old tyrannic institutions, we expected to bear fruit for the political healing of the nations. But the ruthless axe of Rebellion is now lifted up against it. The first stroke is given : but the sharp edge shall return upon the head of those who aimed the treacherous blow. The tree shall not be seriously wounded ; but the skull of Treason and Rebellion shall be cloven through and through. May God aim the blow and pour of his omnipotence into the stroke.

4. Our cause, moreover, is the cause of *Humanity*. We are called to the defense of *man* against his enemies. Those enemies

are principles subversive of his highest good ; and, in the concrete form, those men who consent to be the embodiment and representatives of such principles.

There have always been enough to fight for the Divine Right of Kings; enough to do battle for the advantage of privileged classes—for ranks and tiers of aristocracies : but ours is a warfare for the rights of man as man. We are enlisted in a contest for human liberty and equality. The leaders of the Rebellion laugh at us for maintaining the crazy delusion that all men are created free and equal. This glorious banner-truth of the Declaration of Independence they stigmatize as false. They have found out something new and true within the last twenty years ; *namely*, that only white men and educated men and rich men are created free and equal. The rest are ordained by Providence to be the servants of the privileged class. Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin and men of their class, we are told, did actually believe in human equality ; but they were deluded. They were so bewildered in their moral sentiments as to entertain the opinion that even the poor descendants of Ham, the unfortunate ! ought to possess the natural rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness : but they were guilty, according to the Apostle of Rebellion, of holding notions contrary to the ordinance of Divine Providence. Look upon it, my friends ; consider the matter carefully, for we are fatally involved in it : those who have become our enemies, by their own deliberate choice and act, are the avowed supporters of a Divine-right aristocracy. Color may be the signal : then if you are black you are appointed to servitude. Ignorance and weakness may be the signals : then if you are without culture and destitute of might you must be enslaved, in order to fulfil the intentions of Providence. What shall hinder such abominable sentiments—underlying the newly-formed Servile Confederacy—from coming forward by and by and laying their hands upon us or our neighbors—or the generation after us ?

Would we not be fools and worse than fools, when we might prevent it, if we suffered tyrants to enter our homes and put manacles on our wrists calling them bracelets “in the Providence of God ?” We feel them oppressive, and are conscious that our hands ought to be free and loose for action, as those of other

men : but are informed that we are appointed of God to wear handcuffs as ornaments. Why, such a philosophy as this, and such sentiments as these, will turn the thinking world into atheism, and the unthinking world into barbarism. This is the abyss into which other nations have plunged and wallowed and sunk, to rise no more.

Against all such inhuman principles the free armies of the North are summoned to wage war. And was there ever a more worthy, a nobler, or more inspiring cause than this ? In the earlier centuries, Christian Europe arose and marched in crusading hosts to Palestine, to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the profane hands of the Infidels. But there was no Christ in that Sepulchre. The Lord of life and glory had arisen ages before and ascended into Heaven. It was only a Tomb with sublime memories enshrined in it, holy associations clustering around it. But in this new Crusade, with which we are summoned to march, we are to rescue from imprisoning hands the forms of Liberty and Equality, which the oppressors with malignant energy are struggling to incarcerate ; and to demolish the dungeons themselves with ruin unrestorable.

5. Furthermore, we are called forth in defence of our *National Flag*, and to vindicate its dishonored name. We love those clustering stars in their constellated splendor on the blue Heaven of Liberty, and the waving stripes of the red and the white. This banner is more to us than the material tri-colored silken folds that float gracefully in the sunlight all across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and, until lately, waved everywhere from the great Lakes to the Gulf. It has been torn down and trampled upon by the minions of Despotism ; and to-day, cannot be unfurled in the region of Oppression, without being seized by the destroying hand of Treason. But really, my friends, ought we to mourn or ought we to rejoice that this beautiful ensign of Freedom is suffered to wave no more over the Land of Oppression and the home of the Slave ? We have been ashamed sometimes to think what darkness still brooded upon society beneath this banner of light. And, to-day, for the first time since our Fathers lifted up this glorious banner in the name of the Lord, does it wave exclusively over the land of the free. Let the Bat-

tle-snake be the emblem of Servitude, if our enemies will have it so ; the Old Serpent—or any of his earthly kin—might well be borne upon the flag that floats above the rebellious mob of Treason and Slavery. It can coil and hiss and sting and do the Satanic deeds of Treachery ; but it cannot soar sunward through cloud and tempest like the Eagle—the fit emblem of Freedom.

Now, there is something sublime in lifting up a national banner ; something noble in defending it ; something heroic and martyr-like in dying under its pleasant shadow, and being borne to a patriot's sepulchre wrapped in its lustrous folds. But this is all so because of that which the banner represents. It is the flag of one's country ; and wherever it floats there we look for protection and for the sacred rights of citizenship. It is to us also the emblem of Freedom. It is the flag which waved over the armies of the Revolution ; whose sacred Stars, burning dimly through the smoke of many battles, at length emerging from the twilight of war ascended to flame with perpetual beams upon the sky of nations. It is the flag of our fathers. It is the flag of Liberty and national majesty, floating from the Equator to either Pole. And long may it wave, in its star-spangled splendor, the emblem of Freedom and Union, gloriously amid the ensigns of the nations, when the Flag of Treason shall have disappeared from under the whole Heaven ; when Secession shall lie rotting in its ignominious grave, thrust into it by the avenging hands of freemen and patriots ; and when the spirits of the Conspirators shall have gone to stand before the throne of Eternal and irresistible Justice. Well may we defend our Flag, when it is the representative of such grand ideas, of such sublime realities. It is no puerile enthusiasm, no ebullition of vaporous sentiment, that leads us thus to cherish it and glory in it. But so long as it stands for these ideas, so long as it remains emblematic of these realities, so long as it represents our country, it is worthy of all honor. Living, let us abide under its starry folds : preaching, or praying, or fighting, we will preach and pray and bear arms under it as the flag of these undiscovered United States. And may it not be the miserable fortune of any of us, that, dying, we shall turn our eyes in the fading light to look for it and find it superseded by another : but may the generations who shall follow us bear it onward and upward

in the march of Christian Civilization, till its Stars and Stripes, dimmed in the advancing light of the Millennium, shall fade out under the Banner of the Cross—the emblem of the Salvation and the Union of the Human Race—the Flag of a United World, under the reign of the Divine Prince of Peace. Then, and not till then, for one, am I willing to see the Stars and the Stripes taken down out of the air and rolled up, to be unfurled no more forever.

And thus, my friends, have I endeavored to answer the question “What are we fighting for?” Need we anything further to arouse us and impel us to swift and decisive action? We are called to decide the question whether we still have a government; whether we possess a country; and whether we are freemen or the subjects of an aggressive and barbarous Power seeking the overthrow of our Union and our Liberty, by a base and unnatural conspiracy.

In defence of these dear and sacred rights and institutions, in the name of the God of Justice and Liberty, we have lifted up our Banner upon the mountain of the North; and we believe the Lord of Hosts is mustering the host of battle. The war is begun. How long it shall continue no man can tell. “The first gun is fired, may God protect the right!” The cannonade of Sumpter is the trumpet-call of freemen to arms. I think we of the North have not *sought* this collision with those who were bound by every consideration to be our brethren. Patience, forbearance, long-suffering even to a degree that has caused us the false reputation of cowards, have certainly characterized the Northern people. We have been slow to anger; tardy in the rising spirit of vengeance; reluctant to lay aside the implements of peace and grasp the weapons of war. But having been forced into the contest by the suicidal madness of a mob, we take the field as a whirlwind takes possession of the skies. And no forest of rebellious arms shall be able long to withstand the tornadoes of patriotic justice and retribution.

We had begun to think that the Patriotism of Americans was a thing of history, hardly a shadow of which still existed in our degenerate days. So busy were we with our transport ships, our railroads, telegraphs, manufactories, farms and mines, that we seemed to have grown careless of the country’s honor and pros-

perity. We had suffered demagogues and politicians to have matters so entirely as it pleased them, that it seemed as if we were indifferent quite to our civil and political institutions. Many began to feel melancholy and talk mournfully respecting our present condition and our future career. We were lamenting the dearth of heroes and the scarcity of patriots. When lo ! of a sudden, as when the lightning hurls a burning javelin quite through the sky from east to west—we awoke, leaped upon our feet and stood for the Union and Liberty, almost without a dissenting voice. The dry bones in the valley of Patriotism, were instantly clothed with flesh, and braced with the sinews of might; and, before we could narrate it, the mustering squadrons of freemen joined in the ranks of war. Let us say no more that the Americans of the Free States are wanting in Patriotism. The spirit of the Revolutionary fathers is upon us. The might of those earlier days has descended to us. The blood of heroes has not all run out of our veins, though we have been so repeatedly bled by corrupt and selfish rulers. Thank God ! for the millions of Patriots that this Conspiracy against our government has disclosed to our apprehensive vision. If the war should end to-morrow we have something to carry home as a trophy won by the rumor of war—even the rediscovered patriotism of the North. Let us never despair again.

What, then, is our duty as Patriots? Why, evidently to stand by the Government at all hazards, with every needed sacrifice of money, men and life. Our fathers pledged their “lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor”—for liberty; and can we, after the experience of so many years of political, civil and religious freedom, do less than this? A poor government is to be preferred to no government at all—to anarchy; and the government under which we live we cannot be willing to exchange for any ever yet set up under the sun. We have yet a Constitution; let us defend it. We have still a Union; let us maintain it. We have our Country still, though shaken by intestine strife; let us rally for its protection against the whole rabble of Traitors and Conspirators.

We must not boast and threaten, parade, wave our banners and shout huzzahs ! after the manner of the Fourth of July; but must

be men of action, prompt, bold and efficient. We can attend to celebrations afterward, when with our flag waving over the ruins of rebellion, and upon every re-possest fortress of the United States, another sacred day has been admitted into our national calendar : the day of the Second Conquest by freedom.

But danger may yet arise from another and somewhat unexpected quarter. We may behold again the entreating face of Compromise thrust in between the belligerent hosts. There may come one blowing a trumpet and bearing a white flag, calling out and saying : "Let us have peace ; let us compromise these difficulties." But it is too late, my friends ; there is no possible compromise between right and wrong ; between light and darkness ; between freedom and slavery. That error is finally exploded. Compromise has been tested, one would think, to the satisfaction of everybody. Should we make another attempt at an adjustment of this sort, it would only postpone a little longer, and to our damage, the inevitable issue. There never was a better time than now to settle this vexed and vexing question. The millions of the North have made themselves ready to meet it. If the worst must come ; if it is necessary that our Union be re-baptized with patriotic blood ; there is but one voice among us : "Let it come !" We do not want peace at the sacrifice of liberty and right : we are not so craven-hearted as to desire an ignominious escape from perilous duties.

I do not forget the horrors of war ; neither will I magnify them upon an occasion like this. As a Christian and an embas-ador of the Prince of Peace I should like to preach peace ; and I do and will preach it. But the peace which Jesus Christ brings into the world is not the peace of cowardice, nor unmanly abandonment of one's rights, nor guilty sneaking from the post of danger to find repose in the solitude of selfishness ; but it is the peace that comes in the train of willing sacrifices and noble endeavors in behalf of truth, justice and liberty. There is a peace that God sends sometimes in the track of devastating war. If it were otherwise we should rejoice. If every sword were broken and every gun were burnt, all round the globe, nevermore to be needed, we should be glad. But that time has not yet come. Nay the day may dawn, peradventure it is here already, when we must take

literally the words of Jesus : “He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.”

So let it be our firm and immutable purpose to repel all guilty leagues with wrong. If the question of African Slavery as a despotic and aggressive power in our government is not now laid in its grave, no man can tell how soon again the country may be shaken from centre to circumference by the old agitation. As business men do you want a live earthquake under your warehouses ; which, though it sleep sometimes, wakes suddenly and without warning ? As citizens of a free government, do you want to live in the perpetual dread of conspiracy, treason and rebellion ?

Moreover I believe the hand of the Lord is in this thing. It is the Lord of hosts who is mustering our armies. He has not declared to us his plans for the campaign. But plans He certainly has. Let us seek to know his will in this matter and be guided by it. We are wrought into a tempest of excitement, and we ought to be. I would not counsel any less enthusiasm : more if anything. But throughout it all let us remember that firmness, unfaltering courage, unwavering determination, led on by patriotism and a love of liberty, are the qualities that ensure victory at the last. We must not forget that we are a Christian people upon whom the eyes of the heathen world are turned. And if we are required to make war, for selfdefense against our own countrymen, let us fight like Christians. And there are no such warriors as those who take the sword conscientiously to defend the right, who enter the battle-field fresh from communion with God. There is something fearfully sublime in the thought of a Christian hero, arming himself, not for spiritual, but physical victories. Thousands of such are entering the ranks that are to-day forming in defense of our country.

And now to you, who have come in here to-night from your military encampment, let me address a special word in conclusion. We have not met before : we may not meet again. You go forth to the uncertainties of war. Not uncertain however, as I think, is the final issue ; that must be victory. But the camp and the battle-field are not the parlor and the peaceful street at home. Yet in your departure you have much to inspire you, to encourage and

cheer you on. The rights and the principles which you have taken up arms to defend are not insignificant or doubtful. You have enlisted in the defense of the Constitution, the Union and our beloved Country. The banner that waves above your heads is the same that was carried by your valiant sires. It must never come back, having trailed in the dust under the feet of traitors. Wisconsin expects every man to do his duty. The eyes of the State are upon you. The honor, the courage, the patriotism of the Northwest are to be maintained and vindicated by you. Tell the enemy, when you meet them, that you are only the vanguard of an invincible host, encamped yet at home and ready to march at a moment's warning. Thousands and tens of thousands, if needed, are in the path of duty ready to follow you.

As fellow countrymen we are pledged to succor you ; as citizens of the same state we shall sustain you by every means ; as patriots we shall accompany you by our love and sympathy ; as Christians we will pray for you night and day, till you return with glory and victory on your banners.

I commend you to the blessing and protection of God, the Lord of hosts, the Almighty Ruler of Heaven and Earth, the dear Father of us all. Put your trust in Him. Abide in the shadow of the Omnipotent. Lift up your banners in the name of the Lord. Fight his battles. Do his work. And when the hour of combat shall come ; when the roar of conflict and the tumult of battle are upon you, the Lord Most High be your shield, your Captain, your strength and your trust. And at length, when homeward marching, flushed with the triumphs of a successful campaign, may your grateful hearts rise to Him in thanksgiving and praise. And even if He shall spare you the dreadful experiences of battle forget Him not. Let God be your best friend, in peace or in war, in life and in death, now and forevermore.

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